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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 003426

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/E, AF/RSA, IO/PSC AND IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [USUN](#) [KPKO](#) [SO](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: USAU: AMISOM MANDATE EXTENDED BY TWO MONTHS

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 3399

[1](#)B. ADDIS ABABA 3337

[1](#)C. ADDIS ABABA 3289

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN A. SIMON, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (U) This message contains an Action Request in paragraph 9.

[1](#)2. (U) Summary: On December 22, the African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC) agreed to extend AMISOM's current mandate for two months, and also asked the AU Commission to work closely with the Government of Ethiopia to ensure that the planned withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia is closely coordinated with AMISOM to avoid a security vacuum. Council members noted the readiness of Uganda, Burundi, and Nigeria to deploy one battalion each to AMISOM subject to available financial resources and logistical support. The PSC further endorsed IGAD's December 21 decision to impose sanctions on the unconstitutionally designated Somali prime minister and cabinet. The PSC also left no doubt that the UNSC should bear the long-term responsibility of keeping peace in Somalia by calling on it to immediately authorize the deployment of an international stabilization force and, subsequently, a peacekeeping operation to take over from AMISOM. End Summary.

[1](#)3. (U) A ministerial-level meeting of the AU's PSC was held in Addis Ababa on December 22 to decide the fate of AMISOM. At issue was whether to extend AMISOM's mandate, particularly in light of Ethiopia's announced plans to withdraw its defense forces from Somalia by the end of the year. For AU Commission Chairman Jean Ping, the only course to take vis-a-vis Somalia is to "continue to provide whatever support" Africa can to promote peace, security and stability in Somalia. His report to the Council further stated, "The AU is the only organization the Somalis can readily turn to at this particular moment in their history."

[1](#)4. (U) The PSC's debate on Somalia came a day after IGAD held an extraordinary session in Addis where it adopted targeted sanctions, including a travel ban and asset freeze against all those hindering the ongoing efforts toward reconciliation, peace, and stability in Somalia. PSC Ministers endorsed IGAD's decision to impose sanctions on what the PSC regards as the "unconstitutionally designated Prime Minister (Mohamoud Mohamed Gouled) and his immediate associates." The Council also affirmed its support for Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein Adde and his new cabinet, and it condemned Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf's attempt to appoint a new prime minister. The Council did not specifically sanction President Yusuf as it did not want to sanction a sitting President at this time.

[1](#)5. (U) PSC Ministers also took several other decisions

regarding AMISOM and the future of Somalia. They agreed to extend AMISOM's mandate by two months, from January 16 until March 16. However, given Ethiopia's plans to withdraw their troops by the end of the year, which is in accordance with the Djibouti Agreement, the PSC also asked the AU Commission to work closely with the Government of Ethiopia to ensure that the Ethiopian withdrawal "is closely coordinated with AMISOM to avoid a security vacuum and facilitate the ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening AMISOM." (Note: The AU's final communique reflecting the Council's positions will not be released until December 24. USAU reviewed a draft communique with senior AU interlocutors familiar with the agreed upon final language. End Note.)

¶6. (C) According to our interlocutors, Lamamra and Ping tried repeatedly to convince the Ethiopian representative, Deputy Foreign Minister Tekada, to agree to language indicating a willingness to delay the withdrawal until AMISOM is reinforced. Despite several formulations of the concept, Tekada consistently refused.

¶7. (U) At a press conference following the PSC Ministerial, Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamamra stated that Ethiopia "could stay" in Somalia until January 5, "but no more." Pressed by reporters for further clarification about what would happen should the additional battalions not arrive by January 5, Lamamra said, "we have to ensure that we are ready." AMISOM's mandate otherwise remains unchanged.

¶8. (U) The Council also noted that AMISOM has yet to reach its authorized strength of nine battalions. Even with

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pledges by Uganda, Burundi, and more recently, Nigeria to each contribute one additional battalion, the PSC called on other AU member states to contribute troops and other personnel that would bring AMISOM up to its authorized strength. The Council further called on member states and the international community to provide the logistical and financial support for AMISOM's full deployment and sustenance of its operations. Discussions by AU partners, including the U.S., the EU, and others about financing a more robust AMISOM are contained in reftels.

¶9. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: USAU requests AF/RSA work with Embassies Bujumbura, Kampala, and Abuja to confirm dates for delivery of equipment and airlift (if airlift is necessary) for the three new battalions.

¶10. (U) The PSC also left no doubt that it believes the UNSC has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Council members called on the UNSC to "immediately and without any further delay take the steps expected of it, in particular by authorizing the deployment of an international stabilization force and, subsequently, that of a peacekeeping operation to take over from AMISOM and support the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia." Pending the deployment of a peacekeeping operation, the PSC requested the UNSC to authorize a support package for AMISOM, "bearing in mind the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, on the basis of the proposals contained in the letter addressed by the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council on 19 December 2008." This language is intended to allow AMISOM to access UN assessed funds until a full peacekeeping operation takes effect.

¶11. (U) On the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, the PSC noted its appreciation for the anti-piracy efforts being exerted, but it also noted its "disappointment" that the international mobilization in the fight against piracy "is not matched by an equal commitment to act with the urgency required in order to bring to an end the violence and suffering being witnessed by Somalia." It is "through the early deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in support of the ongoing political process" that the

underlying problems within Somalia can be addressed, according to the Council.

¶12. (C) Comment: The outcome of the AU PSC deliberations on Somalia and AMISOM is very much in line with what Peace and Security Commissioner Lamamra had discussed with us earlier. However, for the PSC approach to succeed, several elements need to fall in place, including a government of national unity in Somalia, and a UN stabilization force following by a peacekeeping operation. Additionally, in the coming days, the AU will want to engage with the Ethiopians to clearly define the extent and nature of the agreed coordination between Ethiopia and AMISOM.

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